

**EXCERPT FROM MINUTES OF JUNE 16, 2009 MEETING OF THE
FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION FAVORING CONTINUED EXPEDITION OF THE C-111 SPREADER
CANAL PROJECT**

June 16, 2009

*Addendum to the February 2009 resolution in light of current open comment period regarding the
Draft Project Implementation Report (PIR)*

WHEREAS Florida Bay is part of Everglades National Park, one of America's most unique and fragile natural treasures; and

WHEREAS the flora and fauna of Florida Bay and the Florida Keys have suffered devastating effects resulting from a system of 1,400 miles of canals and levees to divert natural water flows, built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to control flooding and provide water supply for an ever-increasing population; and

WHEREAS the ecological health of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) and Florida Bay are inextricably linked, and

WHEREAS fish and wildlife populations are under significant stress within Florida Bay and the FKNMS because the "River of Grass" has been drained and diverted through so many canals that it no longer supports the web of life that depends upon it; and

WHEREAS Florida Bay is exhibiting serious signs of decline, such as reoccurring algal blooms, reductions in fish-eating bird, crocodile, and predatory fish populations; and

WHEREAS the total economic value of fishing in Florida is valued at approximately \$9 billion, much of it driven by the fisheries in Florida Bay and the FKNMS; and

WHEREAS the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan of 2000 (CERP) always intended to provide significant environmental benefits to the Florida Keys and Florida Bay; and

WHEREAS the completion of the C-111 CERP and non-CERP projects are absolutely crucial in order for Florida Bay to receive benefits from the restoration projects planned throughout the Everglades ecosystem; and

WHEREAS implementation Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal project is the only planned project that will reduce seepage from Taylor Slough into the C-111 canal in the immediate future; and

WHEREAS Ecological benefits generated from operation of the first phase of the C-111 Spreader Canal project will provide incentive to proceed with the second phase and any other possible phases of the project and other restoration projects to benefit the southern estuaries

WHEREAS \$70 million is currently being held by the South Florida Water Management District to proceed with expedition of Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal project

NOW THEREFORE, THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL, THROUGH THE SUPERINTENDENT, RESOLVES AND RECOMMENDS TO AMMEND THE FEBRUARY 2009 RESOLUTION REGARDING THIS PROJECT TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

- The South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proceed expeditiously to break ground on Phase I (the western component) of the C-111 Spreader Canal Project by September 2009
- Phase I of the C-111 Spreader Canal project is only considered a first step towards restoration of the southern estuaries; other projects, such as Phase II (the eastern component) of the C-111 Spreader Canal project and the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands projects are also needed to provide restoration benefits to the headwaters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
- Phase II planning should begin as soon as possible; while the net benefits of Phase I of this projects are positive, the Draft Project Implementation Report instructs that any negative effects that may occur as a result of Phase I be addressed in Phase II and any other possible phases.

Passed unanimously on this date: June 16, 2009.

The Council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.